

Should that £4.4 million have been spent on accommodation instead of trenches?

New trench system at Eastmere Village STANTA - GOV.UK - Landmarc Support Services
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I've seen criticisms of the DIO's £4.4 million investment in new trench training facilities. Some points have been understandable, others not so much.

There is certainly a legitimate debate about defence priorities, including the need to improve service accommodation. However, realistic trench training is not an optional extra.

The Ukraine conflict has underlined the continuing importance of fieldcraft, fortifications and fighting in complex trench systems. Yes, in this age of drone warfare.

Much of the criticism has been about the very principle of employing contractors on defensive engineering and trench construction, but Ukraine has spent many billion hryvnia on exactly such work, some by private contractors.

Permanent training facilities also avoid the need to recreate such infrastructure for every exercise and provide a valuable long-term asset for UK and allied training. Soldiers still need to learn how to dig and develop their own positions in the field, but that is no substitute for realistic collective training facilities which can be put to years of use.

According to DIO, the investment includes new trench systems at Copehill Down Training Village on Salisbury Plain and "Eastern European-style trench networks" at Eastmere Village within Stanford Training Area (STANTA) in Norfolk.

From the [MOD press release \(image source Landmarc Support Services\)](#), that Eastern-Europe style trench system is a very different animal from your 4-man fire team trench with which I, along with I suspect many of its critics, was familiar back in the day. Bring back the IPK!

Posted at request of a BAFF ex-service member unconnected with DIO or contractors.

{rscomments on}